

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which the subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 2, 5 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fujiu, et al. (6,543,807) in view of Hobaugh, II (7,047,836).

Fujiu discloses a tilt and telescopic position adjustable, impact absorbing type steering column apparatus for an automotive vehicle which comprises an upper column 10; a lower column 2 telescopically slidably fitted to the upper column; a fastening lock mechanism 13 operable between a fastened state in which the fastening lock mechanism fastens fitting portions of the upper column and the lower column radially inwardly so that the steering column is fixed in an adjusted tilt and telescopic position and an unfastened state in which the upper column and the lower column are released so that the tilt and telescopic position is user adjustable and an energy absorbing arrangement which absorbs an impact energy upon a secondary collision with movement of the upper column towards a front side of the automotive vehicle. Fujiu teaches the claimed invention except for the steering column having a low friction material treatment.

Hobaugh discloses an apparatus comprising surface treatment. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the apparatus of Fujiu to have a low friction material treatment to provide a lubrication to facilitate movement of the apparatus.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

4. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Faye M. Fleming whose telephone number is (571) 272-6672. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (9:00-5:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Q. Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-6952. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Faye M. Fleming/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3616